

DECEMBER 22, 2019



# SACRED HEART SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH • BENNINGTON, VERMONT

## MISSION STATEMENT

Our Catholic parish family is united by God's love and our belief in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We live and share our faith in our daily actions as a parish, as a school and as individuals.

## EUCCHARISTIC LITURGY SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil  
4:00 PM

Sunday  
7:30 AM & 9:30 AM

Monday through Friday  
8:00 AM

Mondays with Miraculous  
Medal Devotion  
5:30 PM

First Fridays (only)  
Mass: 9:00 AM  
Holy Hour & Benediction: 7:00 PM

Eucharistic Adoration  
Every Friday after Mass until 8:00 PM

Last Sunday (only)  
Mass: 6:00 PM

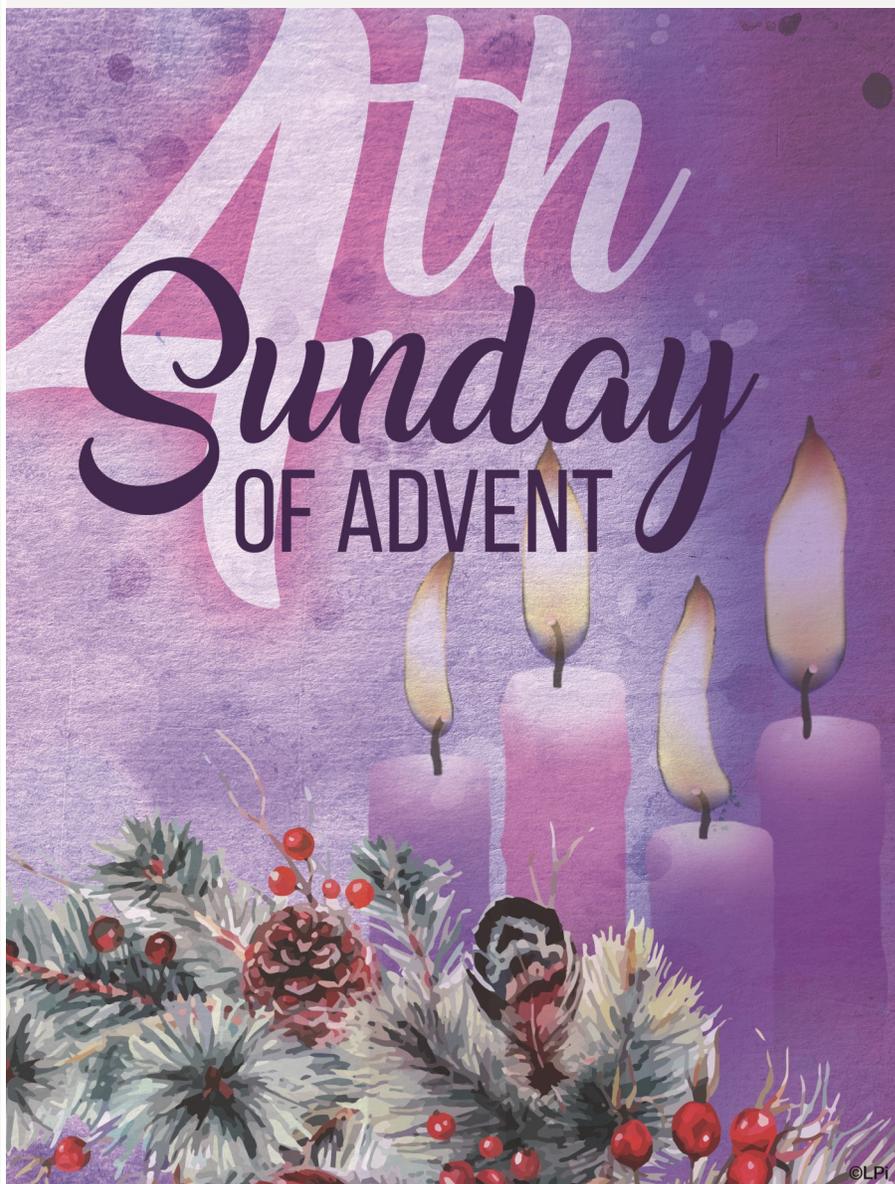
Reconciliation  
Saturday 3:00-3:30 PM or by appointment



CONGREGATION OF  
**HOLY CROSS**  
EDUCATION • PARISH • MISSION

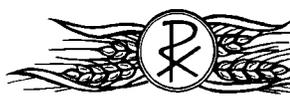
Rev. Robert Wiseman, c.s.c.—Pastor  
Rev. Hugh Cleary, c.s.c.—Parochial Vicar

The Congregation of Holy Cross Priests and Brothers have offered continuous service for over 60 years to the Diocese of Burlington and the Bennington area.



## PARISH CENTER MAIN OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday  
8:30 AM–Noon & 1:00–4:30 PM  
email: [benncath@comcast.net](mailto:benncath@comcast.net)



## Mass Intentions for the Week

And Liturgical Celebrations for  
December 21—29, 2019

(Numbers next to a name indicate Anniversary of death)

**Sat./Sun., Dec. 21/22 Fourth Sunday of Advent**

- 4:00 p.m. ✠ Lillian Sarchino - Her daughter, Marianne  
Our Parish Family
- 7:30 a.m. ✠ Richard Kuhn (5<sup>th</sup>) - The Family  
✠ Donna Antognioni (4<sup>th</sup>) - The Family  
✠ Kay & Al Allen - The Family  
✠ Ronnie Baldwin - The Coreys  
✠ Billy Berard - The Coreys
- 9:30 a.m. ✠ Jim Stewart - His wife, Sharon  
✠ Dawn Rosso (11<sup>th</sup>) - Mark

**Monday, Dec. 23 Saint John of Kanty**

- 8:00 a.m. ✠ Catherine Robare - Russ & Kathy  
Our Parish Family
- 5:30 p.m. Miraculous Medal Novena

**Tuesday, Dec. 24 Late Advent Weekday**

- 8:00 a.m. No Mass
- 4:00 p.m. Our Parish Family
- 8:00 p.m. Our Parish Family
- 12:00 a.m. Our Parish Family

**Wednesday, Dec. 25 The Nativity of the Lord**

- 9:00 a.m. Our Parish Family

**Thursday, Dec. 26 Saint Stephen**

- 8:00 a.m. ✠ Louis N. Betit - Wife & Sons

**Friday, Dec. 27 Saint John**

- 8:00 a.m. ✠ The Deceased Members of the  
Aime & Alexina LaCroix Family  
- The Family

**Sat./Sun., Dec. 28/29 The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph**

- 4:00 p.m. ✠ The Bertone Family  
✠ Raymond Pinsonneault - His wife  
✠ Patricia Perrott - Her Family  
✠ Rebecca Sausville-Smith  
- Charles & Priscilla Salem
- ✠ Aurile & Blanche LaCroix - The Family
- ✠ Living & Deceased Members of the  
Ladies of Ste. Anne
- ✠ Olivia & Omar Moreno—Their sister, Alda  
Our Parish Family
- 7:30 a.m. ✠ John Mahon - Janet & Jim Thibodeau
- 9:30 a.m. ✠ Betty Mahon - Charlene Coon  
✠ Kathy Haynes - Donny & Kim Wassick
- 6:00 p.m. Our Parish Family



*Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."*  
- Mt 1:20-21

## Welcome to our Church!



If you are new to the area or looking for a spiritual home, you can register at Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales parish by stopping in the Parish Office to fill out a brief census card. Or call the Parish Office and we'll be happy to mail you a form.

*Welcome to the family of God and  
Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church!*

## Question of the Week Who were the prophets?

The prophetic role John stepped into goes back to a niche of Bible history from the ninth to the fourth centuries B.C. Prophets appeared when Israel's priesthood and monarchy were up and running to balance (and apply brakes to) those institutions when necessary. Prophets so often contradicted those in power that they seem like professional protesters camped outside the gates of government and organized religion.

This stance may have led to the demise of their role after both kingdom and Temple collapsed during the exile of the Israelites to Babylon. After Israel returned home, the office of the prophets was never quite the same. The voice of challenge ceased to be heard.

Yet the New Testament holds traces of that voice: in John the Baptist, who looks and sounds like Elijah; in Anna, who inhabits the Temple and is an early evangelist of the child messiah; and in the casual mention of Philip's prophetic daughters in the Acts of the Apostles. In fact, traces of prophetic speech and action have surfaced in every generation since that time.

*Alice Camille*

## Readings for the week of December 22, 2019

- Sunday: Is 7:10-14/Rom 1:1-7/Mt 1:18-24
- Monday: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Lk 1:57-66
- Tuesday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Lk 1:67-79
- Wednesday: Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/  
Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25
- Midnight: Is 9:1-6/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14
- Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20
- Day: Is 52:7-10/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18
- Thursday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Mt 10:17-22
- Friday: 1 Jn 1:1-4/Jn 20:1a, 2-8
- Saturday: 1 Jn 1:5—2:2/Mt 2:13-18
- Next Sunday: Sir 3:2-6, 12-14/Col 3:12-21/Mt 2:13-15, 19-23
- ©LPI



**Faith Formation Program**

*"Growing In Faith Together"*

For more information contact the parish office at 442-3141 or 1kathy.murphy@gmail.com

**You are invited to join us on Facebook – SHSF Faith Formation**

**Faith Formation Classes**

Classes start after the 9:30 a.m. Mass and run until 11:45 a.m. on the following dates:

January 12 & 26

**Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**

Pre-K and Kindergarten families now have an opportunity to participate in our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) program. This program will serve children at both SHSF and SJB.

CGS Classes will be held Sundays (2 times per month) 9:15 - 10:30 OR weekly on Tuesdays 10:30 - noon in the atrium at the SHSF Parish Center.



**Mass Bags for Children Available**

Thank you for bringing your young children to Mass. We invite you to borrow our updated parish Mass Bags to help your young disciple be more engaged during our Eucharistic Celebration. Mass Bags are available at the front entrance of the church under the image of Pope Francis. Feel free to take one during Mass - after you're done with them, please put them back in the basket.

*Children are a gift from the Lord - Psalm 127:3*



**On the Fourth Sunday in Advent**

Light all the candles  
Read Isaiah 9:6-7

Lord God, we light this candle to thank you for your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of Peace. We who live in discord and strife have found peace in the promise of eternal life, through Jesus Christ. We give you thanks and praise in Jesus' name, because he lives and reigns with you in your glory, and in the unity of the Holy Spirit, Amen.



Catholic Schools  
Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed.

**The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales**  
307 School Street  
Bennington, VT 05201

**Mr. David Estes, Principal**  
442-2446, Ext. 3

*Providing excellence in academics and a deepening faith in God and Gospel Values in an environment that is caring, challenging, and respectful, striving to develop in every student the habits of thinking critically and acting responsibly in daily life.*



**Christmas Wish List**

Many times during the Christmas season parents and friends wonder if there is something in particular that the school needs and how can they can help. If anyone is willing to donate a special gift during the holidays, the following items are suggested:

- ◆ - postage stamps (books or rolls)
- ◆ - sidewalk salt
- ◆ - Staples or Wal-mart Gift Cards
- ◆ - latex free Band-Aids
- ◆ - disposable ice packs
- ◆ - #10 Envelopes
- ◆ - colored copy paper or card stock (any color)
- ◆ - Lysol Spray
- ◆ - medium & large Ziplock bags

No limit on any of the items, as few or as many as you would like to donate. We can always use them.

**THANK YOU!**



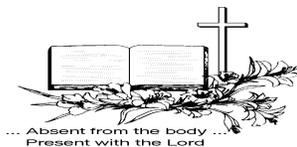
**School Christmas Vacation Schedule**

Our holiday vacation will run from noon on Wednesday, December 18<sup>th</sup> through Wednesday, January 1<sup>st</sup>. School resumes on Thursday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020.



**Please remember the sick, including ~**

Elaine Letourneau, Janet Sausville, Tina Harrington, Bob Smith, Ray Vivaldi, Kim McLure, A.J. Morton, Eden Jeannine Beckwith, Cindy Levitte, Francis "Pete" Roy, Christopher Rubino, Lena Reap, Dolores Pruden, Ruth Emaish, Matthew Rubino, Abigail Grace Lamar, Wilfred LaBonte, James Feeney, Therese Long, Gloria VanDerzee, Adrianna Dewey, Kenneth Swierad, Kathy Keenan, and this week we remember the residents of the Centers for Living and Rehabilitation.



*Born to Eternal Life*  
*Laneta Dicranian*



**Come Let Us Adore Him**

Can you spare 10 or 15 minutes for Eucharistic Adoration during Advent? Or maybe sign-up for an hour at Sacred Heart St. Francis?

**SHSF** - Fridays following morning Mass until 8:00 p.m.

**SJB** - Wednesdays 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

"Spend as much time as possible in front of the Blessed Sacrament and He will fill you with His strength and His power." -Mother Teresa



*May the blessings of this Holy Season be yours in abundance. Wishing all a joyous Christmas!*

*From the Parish Staff  
Fr. Bob, Fr. Hugh  
Don, Jimmy, Jo-Anne, Judy,  
Kathy and Mary*



*Below is a copy of the letter that was recently sent to the families of The School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales. Once you have read it I'm certain you will join me in thanking David for his years of excellent service and wish him well in his retirement. ~ Fr. Bob*

December 4, 2019

Dear Sacred Heart St. Francis Community,

It is with mixed emotion that I am writing to share with you that this school year will be my last at the School of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales. I say this because of my deep affection for a school that has truly been a part of my life for the last 41 years. Here I found a school community that continually inspires academic excellence deeply rooted in the Catholic Faith.

Much has changed for our school over the years. When I started, there were just 91 students in Grades 1 through 6. We have grown exponentially. Our enrollment this year is over 200 students in preschool through Grade 8 and we are currently the second largest elementary in the Diocese of Burlington. At our school, we have a dedicated faculty and staff that care about the success of each child. Their commitment and dedication has made my role as leader so rewarding and enjoyable.

Our students continue to make me so proud each and every day. The joy in their faces has made my experiences at the school something I will treasure forever. Working with them in the classroom, on the stage, at Liturgies, at concerts, and at school events were some of my proudest moments.

We were recently granted continued accreditation through the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The group of educators that visited our school were amazed by what they saw and what our students were experiencing on a daily basis. They were absolutely astounded. In their words, "You have to see this school to really appreciate how wonderful it is." What an accolade!

Because of the quality of people in our school and parish communities that support us spiritually and financially, Sacred Heart St. Francis is poised to have a very bright future. The School Board's strong leadership as well as the compassionate support of so many will continue to sustain the school in years to come.

Our faith helps us know that the time is right for this transition. I have no doubt that Sacred Heart St. Francis will continue to see many successes. It is an incredible school, and I will never forget my years here. I will look forward to hearing about the many accomplishments of our students and our community.

Sincerely,  
*Mr. David Estes*  
Principal

*All Parish Offices will be closed Monday, December 23<sup>rd</sup> thru Friday, December 27<sup>th</sup> in accordance with Diocesan policy.*

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Reprinted from "The Inland See" for the Diocese of Burlington  
December 21–27, 2019

### St Joseph ~ in the face of mystery

At one point in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program each year I ask participants: "Is it possible to know God?" There is usually discussion and then concern that it is an impossible question to answer.

In truth, it is meant as a trick question. On one hand, God is a God of self-revelation. If you read the Scriptures, God gives messages to Abraham and his descendants. God speaks through the burning bush or in the pillar of cloud. God's presence is proclaimed powerfully through the words of the prophets. God is not unknown.

On the other hand, some members of the group come to a different response: To truly know God would require each of us to be equal to God. Therefore, God cannot be fully known. As in any loving relationship, the depth of God's being can never fully be fathomed.

At this point our conversation addresses questions about how to know God more fully and how to respond to the unknown part. I introduce God as mystery. A fully faithful life is lived in the mystery of God even as the faithful come to know God more and more.

As the Church contemplates the role of Joseph in the Nativity event, encountering mystery is a great place to start.

Matthew's Gospel provides the image of Joseph facing crucial questions but ultimately entrusting himself to the plan of God, which he totally and completely cannot understand. By faith, however, he allows himself to be drawn into the tremendous mystery of Incarnation.

Encountering God as mystery admits that God is beyond human ability to know fully. Yet God as mystery invited Joseph to accept what was happening, namely the ultimate revelation of God, God as human!

The use of dreams in Matthew's Gospel is a great way to convey God's plan that intercepts human understanding. Joseph surrenders himself to the mystery. He does not understand but he trusts.

That leads to another aspect of this account, one of discernment. This is the process by which humans attempt to understand God's will in their lives.

Over the years I have known many people who spend a great amount of time "discerning" a big decision that must be made.

Often they go into overdrive trying to find out God's plan for them regarding vocation choice, use of personal wealth or even how to vote. These can be major decisions, but the real process of discernment must start way before one is confronted with big decisions.

Discernment, simply stated, is an awareness of God already active in our lives each day. As such, people become conscious of their strengths and weaknesses.

It is not simply what someone wants to do but also what that person is called to do. If a person is faithful to prayer of listening and is surrounded by honest support, God's plan becomes clear much more easily.

Joseph simply could not have decided to accept pregnant Mary because of a dream alone. There was a context for this, and that context was that Joseph was already, according to Scripture, a just and compassionate man.

He had already been allowing God to direct his life. In the New Testament he proclaims no great canticles as Mary did in Luke's Gospel. Instead, there is quiet certitude and commitment.

*Continued at the top of next column*

In Joseph's own prayer life, there likely already had been some sense of trust in the mystery of God. He was well versed in the Torah and would have known God to be both immanent and transcendent.

His experience would have included daily prayer and a great expectation of the promise of salvation. For this to unfold in his own married life would have been beyond comprehension, but not beyond his sense of God's commitment to the Israelites.

All this leads us the final meditation on Joseph and the Incarnation. Once he had accepted the power of this mystery, he had to face a life of great commitment. There would be challenges and misunderstandings (Lk 2:41-52), no doubt.

But in the face of all this, precisely because of his willingness to live in the mystery of God, his life became one of peacefulness and gentle humility. Those are gifts given to all who trust in the power of God working in their lives.

— *Father Herb Weber, Catholic News Service*

*Father Weber is founding pastor of St. John XXIII Church in Perrysburg, Ohio. His weekly podcast can be found at 23.church.*



### Ladies of Ste. Anne History & Farewell

The Ladies of Ste. Anne's Society of Sacred Heart Church was organized by Mrs. Demarise Bellemare in the early 1900's. She was the first president. Each year a novena is held in honor of Ste. Anne, ending on her feast day, July 26th.

In addition to its spiritual orientation, the Ladies raised money to purchase items for the altar and other needs of the church and parish.

We became the Ladies of Ste. Anne of Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales when the parishes merged in 1995.

In years gone by we held huge Tag Sales, very successfully.

Now because of our ages and diminishing membership, it has become time to disband. This is causing very heavy hearts. I have been a member for 35 to 40 years and have been president several times. I have been the president and only officer for 2 to 3 years.

After our annual Christmas party on December 18<sup>th</sup> we will have a **Mass at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 28<sup>th</sup>**. I ask all members past and present to sit together in the reserved pews. It is our last special time together.

Many thanks to all who have been members over the years. It has been a pleasure to serve you.

*Marie Ray*

### Mass Transit Card

*The drawing for the Amazon Gift Card  
will happen on December 23.*

*Please be sure to place your  
completed cards in the bag by December 22.*

*Thank you!*

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT



### HIS Pantry

“Seeing Christ in the hungry”

Phone Number: 442-1720

[hispantryshsf@gmail.com](mailto:hispantryshsf@gmail.com)

HIS Pantry at SHSF (Facebook link)

Wednesdays 1:00 – 3:30 pm

Fridays 10:00 am – 11:30

### Most needed pantry items at this time:

- ◆ Financial support: cash donations, **store gift cards** (these may be brought to the parish office or placed in the collection basket in an envelope marked for HIS Pantry.)
- ◆ Personal hygiene items: toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo, bars of soap
- ◆ Diapers (all sizes), toilet paper
- ◆ Clean winter coats, sweaters, boots, blankets & seasonal children’s clothes. Please note that they MUST be freshly washed or dry cleaned. Can be gently used (or, better yet, new). No home furnishings or tag sale items please.

If you would like to become a volunteer at HIS Pantry, please call 802-442-1720 or email [hispantryshsf@gmail.com](mailto:hispantryshsf@gmail.com). We always welcome new hands and hearts!

*There is no Second Collection this weekend.*

*There is no Second Collection next weekend.*

*We thank you for your generosity!*



### Thanks to Our Sponsors!

Thank you to the businesses that sponsor our bulletin and make its weekly publication possible.



## Christmas Mass Schedule

### Christmas and New Year’s Mass Schedule

#### Sacred Heart St. Francis de Sales

*Christmas Masses ~ Fr. Hugh Cleary, C.S.C.*

**Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

4:00 p.m. ~ Traditional Music

8:00 p.m. ~ Traditional Music

12:00 Midnight ~ Music with the Church Choir

**Wednesday, December 25<sup>th</sup>**

9:00 a.m. ~ Traditional Music

*Saturday/Sunday, Dec 28/29 ~ Holy Family*

*Fr. Bob Wiseman, C.S.C.*

Regular 4:00 p.m., 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

*Solemnity of Mary ~ Fr. Bob Wiseman, C.S.C.*

December 31<sup>st</sup> at 5:30 pm and

January 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 am

#### St. John the Baptist ~ North Bennington

*Christmas Masses ~ Fr. Bob Wiseman, C.S.C.*

*& Deacon David O’Brien*

**Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

4:00 p.m. ~ Pageant with Mass to follow

Music with the Gospel Group

**Wednesday, December 25<sup>th</sup>**

10:00 a.m. ~ Music with the Choir

*Saturday/Sunday, Dec 28/29 ~ Holy Family*

*Fr. Hugh Cleary, C.S.C.*

Regular 5:30 p.m., 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

*Solemnity of Mary ~ Fr. Hugh Cleary, C.S.C.*

December 31<sup>st</sup> at 5:30 p.m. and

January 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:00 a.m.

### Parish Resources

**Baptism** - Contact Kathy Murphy at the Parish Office.

#### **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)**

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is the communal process through which non-baptized men and women become members of the Catholic Church. It is also suitable for those baptized in different faith traditions who are interested in becoming Catholic, or, for those who were baptized Catholic, but have yet to receive the sacraments of Eucharist and confirmation.

#### **Faith Formation for Children**

To register your child for our Faith Formation Program, please contact Kathy Murphy in the Parish Office.

#### **Marriage**

Couples who wish to prepare for marriage should contact the pastor a minimum of 6 months prior to the requested date of marriage.

#### **Care of the Sick**

To arrange for the Sacrament of the Sick, for Holy Communion to be brought to those unable to attend the Sunday celebration, or for Viaticum for the Dying (Holy Communion for those in danger of death), please contact the Parish Office. It is always possible to anoint the sick during regularly scheduled liturgies.